

Message Text

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17

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 IO-14 EUR-25 SAJ-01 NIC-01 SAM-01

COA-02 EB-11 COME-00 ACDA-19 AID-20 INT-08 STR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 584

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

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CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SN

SUBJECT: TIME MAGAZINE INTERVIEW WITH PRIME MINISTER

LEE KUAN YEW

FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM TRANSCRIPT OF TIME
MAGAZINE ON THE RECORD INTERVIEW WITH PM LEE KUAN YEW ON
MAY 14, 1974. TEXT IS NOW IN PM'S OFFICE BEING REVISED
BEFORE RELEASE. TOPICS DISCUSSED INCLUDED:

1. ACCESS OF SOVIET NAVAL VESSELS TO SINGAPORE
COMMERCIAL SHIPYARDS. "I WOULD THINK UNDER NORMAL
CONDITIONS, NO OBJECTIONS." "I DON'T THINK
WE WANT THE KIND OF ARRANGEMENT WE HAVE (WITH)
ANZUK ...WHERE THEY WOULD HAVE SOME SHORE
FACILITIES. I THINK THAT'S THE CRITICAL DIVIDE...
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THEY HAVE, HOWEVER, NOT SENT ANY NAVAL VESSELS.

THE NEAREST THING TO A NAVAL VESSEL I THINK WERE TWO TENDERS...IN LATE '72. I WOULD IMAGINE THERE WOULD BE CONSIDERABLE ELECTRONIC AND OTHER DEVICES OF A SENSITIVE NATURE ON BOARD RUSSIAN NAVAL VESSELS, AND PROBABLY THAT'S THE REASON WHY THEY HAVE NOT MADE USE OF OUR COMMERCIAL FACILITIES..."

2. BIG POWERS IN INDIAN OCEAN. "WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE NO ONE POWER DOMINATE THE SEAS AROUND US...THEREFORE IF THERE HAS TO BE NAVIES IN THE AREA, WE WOULD LIKE THEM TO NEATLY BALANCE EACH OTHER...THE CENTER OF ATTENTION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN IS THE GULF AREA, WHICH TRADITIONALLY WAS AN AREA GUARDED BY THE BRITISH NAVY...THE LIQUIDATION OF THE BRITISH BASES...MEANT THAT A NEW SITUATION HAD ARISEN. ONE WHICH WAS NOT VERY NEATLY BALANCED BY THE RUSSIAN ENTREE INTO THE AREA BY PUTTING A RATHER OBSOLETE AMERICAN NAVAL VESSEL OFF BAHREIN. I BELIEVE THAT THE RE-ARRANGEMENTS THAT MUST FOLLOW THE REOPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL WILL DEMAND MORE THAN JUST A TOKEN PRESENCE BY ONE NAVAL VESSEL.

3. BIG POWER BALANCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. "IN THIS NEXT DECADE THE WORLD WILL HAVE TO FIND A NEW BALANCE..." "IN SOUTHEAST ASIA THE STEPS ALREADY TAKEN BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND PEKING, AND WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW, MEAN THAT THE WEST OR AMERICA IS NO LONGER GOING TO ASSERT ITS PREDOMINANT PRESENCE MILITARILY IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD, AND WILL ALLOW A NEW BALANCE TO BE STRUCK IN WHICH THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF OTHER GREAT POWERS WILL NOT BE EXCLUDED BY AN OVERPOWERING AMERICAN PRESENCE. THIS NEW EQUILIBRIUM WILL BE BETTER REACHED IF THERE WERE NO IMPATIENT MOVE MADE TO ACHIEVE THE ULTIMATE POSITION TOO QUICKLY."

4. THE MOST CRUCIAL PROBLEM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.
"...INADEQUATE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
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...I THINK THIS IS THE GREATEST WEAKNESS OF ALL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA... IF...POLITICAL PROBLEMS ARISING OUT OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DISSATISFACTIONS...ARE EXPLOITED BY OUTSIDE POWERS OR FORCES, EITHER THROUGH THE SUPPLY OF ARMS AND IDEOLOGY, THEN THESE PROBLEMS WILL REACH AN ACUTE LEVEL OF CONFLICT."

5. PROBLEMS FACING SINGAPORE. "...OUR BIGGEST CONCERN IS HOW THE WORLD ECONOMY GOES BECAUSE WE ARE SO DEPENDENT ON TRADE WITH THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, THAT IF THEY GO INTO A RECESSION...THEN WE ARE BOUND TO SUFFER. IF THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ...CANNOT RE-CYCLE THE SURPLUS OIL DOLLARS... THEN THERE'S GOING TO BE GREAT FINANCIAL INSTABILITY. AND THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THAT FOR SINGAPORE ARE VERY GRAVE."

6. WORLD LEADERSHIP CRISIS. "...EVENTS SINCE THE CRISIS IN OCTOBER HAVE SHOWN THAT THE MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS REGARDLESS OF THE PREOCCUPATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL LEADERS, OR EVEN THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES...THE CRITICAL LEADERSHIP FOR THE WEST IS THAT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. THAT'S BEEN OPERATING UNDER STRESS FOR OVER A YEAR. CONSIDERABLE STRESS. NO GRAVE MISHAP HAS YET HAPPENED TO THE WORLD. NOTHING'S BEEN GIVEN AWAY, EITHER IN THE MIDDLE EAST WAR, NOR IN THE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION ABOUT SALT II, OR MUTUAL FORCE REDUCTIONS IN EUROPE. SO PERHAPS THE WORLD IS LEARNING TO LIVE WITH A NEW KIND OF SITUATION."

7. HOPES FOR EXPANDED TRADE. "WITH THE AMERICANS, WE HOPE THEY WILL ADOPT...A GSP SCHEME, AMERICA HAS NOT ADOPTED THAT, ALTHOUGH OUR TRADE WITH AMERICA HAS BEEN MORE SATISFACTORY."

8. SUCCESSION IN SINGAPORE. (IF LKY RETIRES OR RESIGNS)
"...A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO FEEL THAT THEY CAN DO AS GOOD A JOB IF NOT BETTER, THAN MY COLLEAGUES AND I HAVE BEEN DOING, WILL PROBABLY RECEIVE ENOUGH SUPPORT TO TAKE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OVER AND RUN THE PLACE...IF I HAD THE MISFORTUNE TO MEET THE BUS AT THE WRONG PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME, THE PROVERBIAL BUS WILL NOT LEAVE SINGAPORE WITHOUT AN EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT. BUT IF ALL THE PEOPLE IN GOVERNMENT WERE TO BE KNOCKED DOWN BY THE SAME BUS, THEN I THINK THERE WOULD BE A HIATUS FOR SOME TIME BEFORE ANOTHER GROUP EMERGES...NOBODY REALLY APPOINTS HIS POLITICAL SUCCESSOR."

9. TEXT BEING POUCHED DEPARTMENT.
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